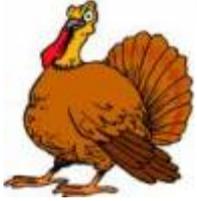


# Osseo AA Newsletter

Suburban North Alano Vol. 1 Issue 2

OsseoAA.org

"One Day at a Time"



*Happy Thanksgiving*



## Squad Leader's Meeting

It's important for each squad to be represented at this meeting. This is the time to bring new ideas to the attention of the club. It's also a time to share information from the month past. I know that it can be an imposition on one's time, but we all need to remember how much time we spent on our drinking; time spent actually drinking and time spent planning our next drinking venture. I'm not too sure about you but I know it consumed a lot of my time.

As our club grows in membership we need to show the younger members the way it works for us. One of the ways is giving back to the people that help us maintain sobriety. Attending the squad leader's meeting is service work that's extremely important. Remember, sobriety can only be kept by giving it away.

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### Help!!!

- *We still need contributors. If it's just me writing, you're going to get bored.*
- *Check the website often as it's constantly changing. It's also a good way to keep up with the news. If you have club news, please send it in.*
- *Edited by Dani B.*

## Building Maintenance

Our building is in need of maintenance in certain areas. In years past, members have volunteered time and sometimes materials in helping maintain our club. We could use a stucco person, someone familiar with windows (carpenter perhaps) and maybe an electrician to get some lighted exit signs for our doors. We're being inspected by the Maple Grove Fire Department and that was one of the issues that we'll need to address.

Energy costs are rising and we need to conserve as much as possible. When you leave your meeting rooms, please turn off the lights. Please leave all the windows closed when the A/C or heat is on. I know this sounds like nit-picking but we all need to do our part to help with energy conservation and keeping costs down.

## Smoking Ban or Smoking Gun?

by Anonymous

Once again Big Government has stepped in and is telling us what we can and cannot do. They have taken it upon themselves to determine that second hand smoke kills people and thus has banned smoking in public places. If government feels so strongly about this, why haven't they stepped up to the plate and put a ban on drinking in public places? Far more people are killed each year by drunk drivers than by second hand smoke, yet we are still allowed to consume intoxicating beverages in the public eye. Seems ironic that the consumption of alcohol is not illegal in public places while smoking a cigarette in a public place is a crime. Sure, second hand smoke stinks and is offensive. But a person who downs several whiskey sours also stinks and is often offensive, not to mention the emotional harm they impose upon their families and loved ones by their nasty habit. Put a drunk behind the wheel and he is a far greater threat to the public than a bit of smoke that lingers in the air.

I highly doubt that second hand smoke is as dangerous as they claim. First of all, most of the smoke has been filtered through a paper filter and then through the smoker's lungs. Whatever smoke that lingers is also diluted by the mass amount of air that is already present in the room. The smokers themselves take the hot nicotine-laden smoke directly into their lungs from the burning source of the cigarette. This is undoubtedly harmful to the human lungs, yet you don't see those smokers collapsing on the streets right and left from inhaling the smoke directly. Sure, in time it will kill the smoker but this is a gradual process that happens over a lifetime, so I suppose it would take about ten or twenty lifetimes for the non-smoker to die from second hand smoke. I guess that's a risk the government doesn't want the non-smokers to take.

This new smoking ban has a direct and serious affect on our Alano society. Our Alano club is an open door for newcomers who are looking for sobriety. A high percentage of those newcomers are smokers themselves. Tell an alcoholic that he can't smoke in a place that he doesn't want to be at to begin with, and he's likely to not come back. How many suffering alcoholics will never find sobriety because we are more concerned about breathing in a little second hand smoke than by helping a fellow drunk recover from our dreadful disease? Did we all not tolerate the smoky bars that we used to hang out in when we were looking for our next drink? I didn't hear any drunks complaining about how smoky it was while they were spending hours upon hours at the local tavern.

But let's not stop with second hand smoke. If the government is so intent on protecting the public's health, shouldn't they be shutting down the fast food chains, the over use of pharmaceutical drugs, and the endless list of chemical products that are sold to the public? What's next? Banning hair spray because of the toxic fumes left in the air? Maybe perfume should be banned too because of the negative allergic reactions that so many people have to it. The list could go on and on!

Anonymous

## Wednesday Step Class

Stan A., the gentleman with 49 years of sobriety who teaches our step class on Wednesdays, would like all the squads to inform their new members of this meeting. It's an extremely important part of our club and should be attended by anyone who plans to make "Osseo AA" their home. It's informative and rewarding. Stan is assisted by several long standing members of Suburban North Alano. Schedules are posted outside room 1.

## A New Persons Perspective

by Julie B.

It was late august, Tuesday evening, when I first came to North Suburban Alano. I had just gotten back from visiting my Dad in North Carolina for the summer, where I first got sober, June 5th, 2007, and was trying to find some new meetings to attend. At first I was a little biased towards my meetings in North Carolina, but that quickly diminished when I was greeted warmly by Chris S. who hugged me as soon as she saw me. I knew instantly that the women's meeting on Tuesday was the meeting for me. I would soon learn that the Friday meetings would also be another favorite. The other meetings during the week on Sundays, Mondays, and Wednesdays are great but there is something very special about the Tuesday women's meeting and Friday meetings. Friday meetings are great because afterwards, the majority of the fellowship go to Perkins for a bite to eat and to just hang out. We also do a lot of other activities such as the Halloween party and other get togethers for celebrations, and I believe spending time with the fellowship is one of the things that keeps me sober. All in all, as a 19 year old addict, the people in this club have welcomed me with open arms, encouraged me to keep coming back, and have been there for me; they are like family to me.

**I just read an article on the dangers of drinking...**

**Scared the shit out of me.**

**So that's it!**

**After today, no more reading.**

**Getting angry can sometimes be like leaping into a wonderfully responsive sports car, gunning the motor, taking off at high speed and then discovering the brakes are out of order.**

--Maggie Scarf

Anger can multiply our difficulties in many situations. All of us can look back and remember times when we only made our problems worse because we stepped on the gas and lost all ability to use the brakes.

Now we are growing into more adulthood. We are learning to manage our feelings and use them well. This doesn't happen overnight. We would do well to recall how energized we have felt when we let our anger fly and how much we loved that energy at the moment. Only later did we face the damage we caused. Saying we are sorry isn't enough; we must also be willing to take on the harder task of changing our behavior. When we accept that we love the power and the energy of our anger and aggression, we can begin to rein it in and take charge of it rather than be ruled by it.

## Harry Thomas Armstrong

Harry passed away almost twenty-two years ago. That's more years than some of our newer members have been alive. He died of cancer and is interred at Fort Snelling National Cemetery. I've visited with him on several occasions. He hasn't changed a bit in my mind. They say that someone is never dead as long as one person remembers him. Harry is remembered by all of the "Old Timers" at the club.

I first met Harry on a Friday evening back in mid 1970's. I walked into the club and all of these "old guys" started arriving. They were all talking and having a good time. I was pretty new in AA and I guess I just kind of kept my mouth shut and stood off to the side. I know that's hard for some of you to believe, but it's true. They all went in to sit down and started BS'ing before the meeting started. I was listening to what they were talking about and it was as far from the bible as one could get. Harry was talking about his experiences at Northwestern Hospital Treatment Center. It seems he was in a room next to two old ladies, but he referred to them a little differently. I'm afraid I won't be able to write what he actually said but anyone interested can ask an old timer. I knew instantly that this place was HOME. This was where I belonged. Finally, I was a round peg who'd found his round hole.

Harry never dominated a meeting. He just interjected his thoughts from time to time. There was the occasion when Fritz J. decided he was going to quit smoking and brought in a battery powered fan to blow the smoke away from himself. Unfortunately he sat next to Harry and pointed the fan toward him. Harry turned toward him and told him he was going to shove that fan up his butt and turn him in to a motorboat. Fritz turned the fan off about as fast as humanly possible.

Harry had his opinion on holding hands also. He was definitely not in favor of that. We were all a bunch of "Hand Holding SOB's".

I remember in one meeting where a new guy asked for help with his family situation. He was having some real difficulty with his wife. The new guy was asking around the table for possible solutions to his dilemma. Harry volunteered: "Son, I have a solution for you". Anxiously the new fellow asked, "What can I do Harry?" Harry's answer was, "Divorce the bitch"

On another occasion, Harry was telling how he stopped his semi-truck on a road to go into a liquor store to buy a bottle. It was early spring and there was a new light snowfall. Harry got out of the truck and was going to walk over the snow to the liquor store. He didn't realize there was a little snow over a thin crust of ice in a ditch. Harry went through the snow and ice up to his waist into freezing cold water. At the same time he noticed a cop car sitting there. He went into the store, made his purchase and came back outside. The cop car was still there. Not wanting the cops to think he was drunk, he figured he'd retrace his steps to get back to the truck. Harry walked right back through the ditch getting soaked for the second time in minutes and back to his truck. He never did tell me if the cops stopped him. They probably didn't, figuring the poor guy had punished himself enough.

Harry could avoid work with the best of them. He had a cabin up north of Grand Rapids. They were going to put in a sand point well and Harry had recruited some help from the club. He had these tremendous plans to hammer down this well. As it went, Harry never did a lick of work. He stood around with his cup of coffee and instructed everyone else on the proper way to do it. I don't think that well ever pumped water.

Harry also hosted our annual fishing trip at his cabin. What fun that was. We went to fish and played cards for three straight days. I do remember fishing for a brief time once or twice but generally Harry would have the table set up the minute we walked in.

I went to Harry's home one evening to visit. Harry informed me that the IRS was coming to audit his books. Soon the IRS auditor showed up at Harry's front door. Harry answered it in his boxer shorts and sleeveless t-shirt. He informed the IRS guy that he would allot him 15 minutes of his precious time. If he wasn't done in that time, Harry told him he would throw him out on his butt. The guy finished in 12 minutes, thanked Harry and told him everything looked in order. I broke out laughing when the guy left.

Later, when Harry was unable to work because of his cancer, he'd sit home watching TV. One of his favorite shows was "Judge Wapner". I remember Harry talking to the TV telling the judge, "Throw the SOB in jail." He also liked to watch the Minnesota Twins on TV. He never liked Gary Gaetti, the third baseman. That was another occasion for Harry to yell at the TV. When his wife Pat got home from her job with the Post Office, he'd be yelling, "Old Lady, get me a cup of coffee!!" I think that was his most endearing name for Pat.

When he knew his time was near, he asked that I come to his house to be there when he went to meet his maker. Harry was in pain but lucid to the end. He asked that I come into the bedroom to say goodbye. Shortly after talking to him, Harry passed on.

Even his funeral was somewhat of a fiasco. We had to drive all the way out to Fort Snelling and that damn hearse was doing about 90 miles per hour. Norm L. had a hard time keeping up in his conversion van. I think we might have approached 100 MPH trying to catch up at one time.

Harry's gruff demeanor was just a façade. My kids were very young when they met Harry. Harry would yell and rant and rave and my kids would just laugh. I'd ask them why they were laughing and they'd tell me, "Harry doesn't really mean it. He's nice!" On the inside he was a marshmallow.

All in all, I think Harry was one of the most memorable people I have ever met in AA. I loved him dearly and I still miss him terribly. He was so very important in my early sobriety. I can never thank him enough for all he's done for me.

**When you do all the talking, you only learn what you already know.**  
--Anonymous